

REMARKS

After entry of this amendment, claims 1, 4-21, 24-33, 36-43, 50-68, and 71 remain pending. Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejections lodged in the present Office Action. However, the present Office Action allowed claims 50-62. Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 21, 33, and 66 to include features similar to those indicated as allowable (e.g. see Office Action, page 2, item 3). Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1, 21, 33, and 66 are in condition for allowance. The remaining claims depend from one of the independent claims, and thus are also in condition for allowance.

Information Disclosure Statements (IDSs)

Applicants note that the previously-received PTO-1449 form from the IDS mailed November 8, 2002 (and received in the PTO on November 13, 2002) is missing the Examiner's initials next to the reference B9. As the reference is not crossed out, Applicants presume this is merely an oversight. Applicants include a copy of the PTO-1449 form attached to this response, with the missing initials highlighted. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner initial the attached PTO-1449 form and return it with the next Action.

CONCLUSION

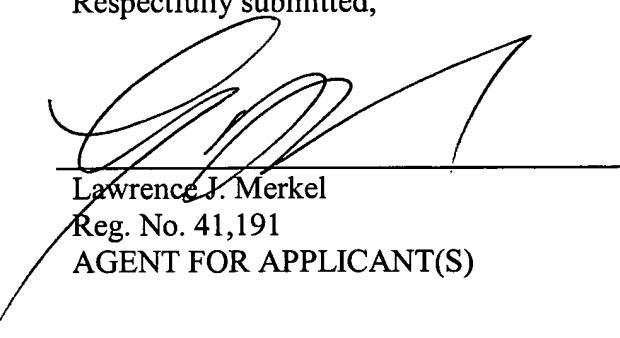
Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is requested.

If any extensions of time (under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136) are necessary to prevent the above referenced application(s) from becoming abandoned, Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extensions. If any fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge said fees to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert, & Goetzel, P.C. Deposit Account No. 501505/5500-66500/LJM.

Also enclosed herewith are the following items:

- Return Receipt Postcard
- Petition for Extension of Time
- Notice of Change of Address
- Other: PTO-1449 form from previous IDS with missing initials highlighted

Respectfully submitted,



Lawrence J. Merkel
Reg. No. 41,191
AGENT FOR APPLICANT(S)

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